

Church Committee: JFK Assassination, Summary & Findings (B5.S1)

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GET THE FULL AUDIOBOOK: <https://sellfy.com/OurHiddenHistory> More Church Committee Reports: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBINnEpNu5u5DDKZr3zRDb9v_Q2pV55dA ---- This is an audio recording of a section of the Final Report of the Church Committee (United States Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities) on the Investigation into the Assassination of John F. Kennedy: The Performance of the Intelligence Agencies (Book 5 Section 1). This is a recording of Section 1 of Book 5, the Summary and Findings.

About Book 5 of the Church Committee Report (from the Mary Ferrell Website): "The Church Committee also conducted a limited investigation of the Kennedy assassination, focusing on how well the FBI and CIA supported the Warren Commission. This short report sharply faulted those agencies, stating that the Committee 'developed evidence which impeaches the process by which the intelligence agencies arrived at their own conclusions about the assassination, and by which they provided information to the Warren Commission. This evidence indicates that the investigation of the assassination was deficient.'"

For the full book, visit the Mary Ferrell Foundation: <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=1161>

Produced by D. Giglio for 'Our Hidden History' and Narrated by Chris Abernathy (<https://www.fiverr.com/provoman>)

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ninety-fourth Congress second session Senate report number 94 - 755 the investigation of the assassination of President John F Kennedy performance of the Intelligence Agency's book 5 final report of the Select Committee to study governmental operations with respect to intelligence activities United States Senate April 23rd 1976 1 summary and findings the Select Committee's investigation of alleged assassination attempts against foreign leaders raised questions of possible connections between these plots and the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy questions were later raised about whether the agencies adequately investigated these possible connections and whether information about these plots was provided to the President's Commission on the assassination of President Kennedy the Warren Commission as a result pursuant to its general mandate to review the performance of the intelligence agencies the Select Committee reviewed their specific performance with respect to their investigation of the assassination of the president a the scope of the committee's investigation the committee did not attempt to duplicate the work of the Warren Commission it did not review the findings and conclusions of the Warren Commission it did not re-examine the physical evidence which the Warren Commission had it did not review one of the principal questions facing the Commission whether Lee Harvey Oswald was in fact the assassin of President Kennedy instead building upon the Select Committee's earlier work and utilizing its access to the agencies and its expertise and their functions the committee examined at the performance of the intelligence agencies in conducting their investigation of the assassination and their relationships to the Warren Commission in the course of this

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Commission in the course of this investigation more than 50 witnesses were either interviewed or deposed literally tens of thousands of pages of documentary evidence were reviewed at the agencies and more than 5,000 pages were acquired in addition the committee relied a great deal on testimony taken during the course of its investigation of alleged plots to assassinate foreign leaders especially testimony relating to knowledge of those plots the committee has been impressed with the ability and dedication of most of those in the intelligence community most officials of the FBI the CIA and other agencies performed their assigned tasks thoroughly competently and professionally supervisors at agency headquarters similarly met their responsibilities and are deserving of the highest praise yet as this report documents these individuals did not have access to all of the information held by the most senior officials in their own agencies nor did they control or even influence many of the decisions made by those senior officials decisions which shaped the investigation and the process by which information was provided to the Warren Commission thus it cannot be too strongly emphasized that this report examines the performance of the senior agency officials in light of the information available to them many potential witnesses could not be called because of limitations of time and resources for this reason the committee has relied a great deal on the documentary record of events the committee's report distinguishes information obtained from documents from information it obtained it through sworn testimony through citations since the documentary records may not accurately reflect the true events on the other hand the committee has on many occasions noted that witnesses may have no recollection of the events described in

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recollection of the events described in documents which they either prepared or in which they were mentioned the following report details the evidence developed to date the report is intended to be descriptive of the facts the committee has developed the committee believes the investigation should continue in certain areas and for that reason does not reach any final conclusions instead the Select Committee has recommended that the Sen Committee on Intelligence continue this investigation in those areas where the Select Committee's investigation could not be completed the summary in the days following the assassination of President Kennedy nothing was more important to this country than to determine the facts of his death no one single event has shaken the country more yet the evidence the committee has developed suggests that for different reasons both the CIA and the FBI failed in or avoided carrying out certain of their responsibilities in this matter the committee emphasizes that this reports discussion of investigative deficiencies and the failure of American intelligence agencies to inform the warren commission of certain information does not lead to the conclusion that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy

instead this report details the evidence the committee developed concerning the investigation those agencies conducted into the president's assassination their relationship with each other and with the Warren Commission and the effect their own operations may have had on the course of the investigation it places particular emphasis on the effect their Cuban operations seemed to have on the investigation however the committee cautions that it has seen no evidence that Fidel Castro or others in the Cuban government plotted President Kennedy's assassination in retaliation for US operations against Cuba the report

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operations against Cuba the report details these operations to illustrate why they were relevant to the investigation thus the CIA operation involving a high-level Cuban official codenamed an lash is described in order to illustrate why that operation and its possible ramifications should have been examined as part of the assassination investigation similarly although Cuban exile groups opposed to Castro may have been upset with Kennedy administration actions which restricted their activities the committee has no evidence that such groups plotted the assassination almost from the day Castro took power in Cuba the United States became the center of attempts to depose him Cuban exiles anti-communists business interests underworld figures and the United States government all had their own reasons for seeking to overthrow the Castro government these interests generally operated independently of the others but on occasion a few from each group would join forces in a combined effort in April 1961 a force of Cuban exiles and soldiers of fortune backed by the CIA attempted an invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in November of that year the United States government decided that further such overt paramilitary operations or no longer feasible and embarked on Operation Mongoose this operation attempted to use Cuban exiles and dissidents inside Cuba to overthrow Castro when the United States faced a major confrontation with the Soviet Union during the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis it terminated Mongoose the CIA's covert operations against Cuba were reduced and the FBI and other agencies of government began to restrict the paramilitary operations of exile groups this rather sudden shift against paramilitary activity of Cuban exile groups generated hostility supporters of

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groups generated hostility supporters of some of these groups were angered by the change in government policy they viewed this as a weakening of the US will to oppose Castro throughout this period the CIA had been plotting the assassination of Castro as another method of achieving a change in the Cuban government between 1960 and early 1963 the CIA attempted to use underworld figures for this assassination by May 1962 the FBI knew of such plots and in June 1963 learned of their termination following a June 1963 decision by a special group of the National Security Council to increase covert operations against Cuba the CIA renewed contact with a high-level Cuban government official codename and lash at his first meeting with the CIA in over a year AM lash proposed Castro's overthrow through an inside job with us support em lash considered the assassination of Castro a necessary part of this inside job shortly after this meeting with M lash Castro issued a public warning reported prominently in the US press about the United States meeting with terrorists who wished to eliminate Cuban leaders he threatened that Cuba would answer in kind five days after Castro issued this threat the Coordinating Committee for Cuban affairs an interagency planning committee subordinate to the National Security Council's special group met to endorse or modify then existing contingency plans for possible retaliation by the Cuban government representatives of the CIA and of the state defense and Justice Department's or on this committee the CIA representatives on this committee were from its special affairs staff SAS the staff responsible for Cuban matters

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staff responsible for Cuban matters generally and the am lash operation those attending the meeting on September 12th agreed unanimously that there was a strong likelihood Castro would retaliate in some way against the rash of covert activity in Cuba at this september 12th meeting this committee concluded Castro would not risk major confrontation with the United States it therefore rejected the possibility that Cuba would retaliate by attacking American officials within the United States it assigned no agency the responsibility for

consideration of this contingency within weeks of this meeting the CIA escalated the level of its covert operations in forming a m-- lash the United States supported his coup despite warnings from certain CIA staffers that the operation was poorly conceived and insecure the head of SAS Desmond Fitzgerald met M lash on October 29th 1963 told him he was the personal representative of Attorney General Robert Kennedy stated the United States would support a coup on November 22nd at a pre-arranged meeting a CIA case officer told M lash he would be provided rifles with telescopic sights and explosives with which to carry out his plan he was also offered a poison pen device following the president's death searches of FBI and CIA files revealed that Lee Harvey Oswald was not unknown to the intelligence agencies in late 1959 the FBI opened a security file on Oswald after his defection to the Soviet Union after Oswald's returned to this country in June 1962 he was interviewed twice by FBI agents on each occasion he repeatedly lied he also refused to be polygraphed about his negative answers to questions of ties with Soviet

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to questions of ties with Soviet intelligence yet the FBI closed the Oswald's security case immediately after the second interview the case was reopened in March 1963 but Oswald was not interviewed by the FBI until August 10th 1963 when he requested an interview after his arrest in New Orleans for disturbing the peace on the occasion of this third interview he again repeatedly lied to FBI agents a month later Oswald visited Mexico City where he visited both the Cuban and Soviet diplomatic establishments and contacted a vice consul at the latter who was in fact a KGB agent despite receiving this information on Oswald's Mexico City activity the FBI failed to intensify its investigative efforts it failed to interview him before the assassination despite receiving a note from him warning the FBI to leave his wife alone immediately after the assassination FBI director J Edgar Hoover ordered a complete review of the FBI's handling of the Oswald security case within six days he was given a report which detailed serious investigative deficiencies as a result of these deficient he's 17 FBI personnel including one assistant director were disciplined the fact that the FBI felt there were investigative deficiencies and the disciplinary actions it took were never publicly disclosed by the bureau or communicated to the warren commission the evidence suggests that during the Warren Commission investigation top FBI officials were continually concerned with protecting the bureau's reputation and avoiding any criticism for not fulfilling investigative responsibilities within weeks after the assassination the FBI at the urging of senior government officials issued a

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senior government officials issued a report concluding that Oswald was the assassin and that he had acted alone the bureau issued its report on the basis of a narrow investigation focused on Oswald without conducting a broad investigation of the assassination which would have revealed any conspiracy foreign or domestic despite knowledge of Oswald's apparent interest in pro-castro and anti-castro activities and top-level awareness of certain CIA assassination plots the FBI according to all agents and supervisory personnel who testified before the committee made no special investigative effort into questions of possible Cuban government or Cuban exile involvement in the assassination independent of the oswald investigation there is no indication that the FBI or the CIA directed the interviewing of cuban sources or of sources within the Cuban exile community the division of the FBI responsible for investigating criminal aspects of the assassination and not the division responsible for investigating subversive activities including those of Cuban groups was primarily responsible for the investigation and served as liaison to the Warren Commission director Hoover himself perceived the Warren Commission as an adversary he repeatedly remarked that the Commission particularly the Chief Justice was seeking to criticize the FBI and merely attempting to find gaps in the FBI's investigation on two separate occasions the latter immediately upon release of the commission's report director Hoover asked for all derogatory material on Warren Commission members and staff contained in the FBI files neither the CIA nor the FBI told the Warren Commission about the CIA attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro Allen Dulles former director of Central Intelligence was a member of the Warren Commission

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was a member of the Warren Commission and presumably knew about CIA plots during his tenure with the agency although he probably was unaware of the am lash operation FBI director Hoover and senior FBI officials also knew about these earlier plots in July 1964 two months before the Warren Commission issued its 26 volume report of its investigation and findings FBI officials learned that a Cuban official not known to the bureau as M lash was plotting with the CIA to assassinate Castro however there is no evidence this knowledge affected the FBI investigation of the president's assassination in any way the Attorney General and other government officials knew there had been previous assassination plots with the underworld none of the testimony or documents received by the Warren Commission mentioned the CIA assassination plots the subordinate officers at the FBI and the CIA who acted as liaisons with the Warren Commission did not know the CIA assassination attempts the am lash plot was more relevant to the Warren Commission's work than the early CIA assassination plots with the underworld unlike these earlier plots the am lash operation was in progress at the time of the assassination unlike the earlier plots the Hamlisch operation could clearly be traced to the CIA and unlike the earlier plots the CIA had endorsed an lashes proposal for a coup the first step to him being Castro's assassination despite Castro's threat to retaliate for such plotting no one directly involved in either agency's investigation was told of the am lash operation no one investigated a connection between the am lash operation and President Kennedy's assassination although Oswald had been in contact with pro-castro and anti-castro groups for many months before the assassination the CIA did not conduct a thorough investigation of the questions of Cuban

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investigation of the questions of Cuban government or Cuban exile involvement in the assassination CIA officials knowledgeable of the am lash plot testified they did not relate it to the president's assassination however those at CIA and FBI responsible for their agency's investigation testified to that had they been aware of the plot they would have considered it relevant to their investigation the individual who directed the CIA investigation for the first month after the assassination testified that he felt knowledge of the Hamlisch operation would have been a vital factor in shaping his investigation his successor at the CIA also stated that knowledge of the am lash plot would have made a difference in his investigation individuals on the Warren Commission staff have expressed similar opinions as to all plots against Castro there is also evidence that CIA investigators requested name traces which should have made them aware of the am lash operation but for some reason they did not learn of that operation although the Warren Commission concluded its work in September 1964 the investigation of the assassination was not to end both FBI director Hoover and CIA deputy director for plants Richard Helms pledged to keep the matter as an open case in 1965 the FBI and the CIA received information about the am lash operation which indicated the entire operation was insecure and caused the CIA to terminate it despite the fact that the information then received might have raised doubts about the investigation of the president's assassination neither agency re-examined the assassination the assassination of President Kennedy again came to the attention of the intelligence agencies in 1967 President Johnson took a personal interest in allegations that Castro had retaliated

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Castro had retaliated although the FBI received such allegations no investigation was conducted on the very day President Johnson received the FBI reports of these allegations he met with CIA director Richard Helms the next day Helms ordered the CIA inspector general to prepare a report on agency sponsored assassination plots although this report raised the question of a possible connection between the CIA plots against Castro and the assassination of President Kennedy it was not furnished to CIA investigators who were to review the Kennedy assassination investigation once again although these CIA investigators requested information that should have led them to discover the am lash operation they apparently did not receive that information see findings the committee emphasizes that it has not uncovered any evidence sufficient to justify a conclusion that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy the committee has however developed evidence which impeaches the process by which the intelligence agencies arrived at their own conclusions about the assassination and by which they provided information to the warren commission this evidence indicates that the investigation of the assassination was deficient and that facts

which might have substantially affected the course of the investigation were not provided the Warren Commission or those individuals within the FBI and the CIA as well as other agencies of government who were charged with investigating the assassination the committee has found that the FBI the agency with primary responsibility in the matter was ordered by director Hoover and pressured by higher government officials to conclude its investigation quickly the FBI conducted its investigation in an atmosphere of concern among senior bureau officials that it would be criticized and its reputation tarnished rather than addressing its investigation to all

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addressing its investigation to all significant circumstances including all possibilities of conspiracy the FBI investigation focused narrowly on Lee Harvey Oswald the committee has found that even with this narrow the FBI investigation as well as the CIA inquiry was deficient on the specific question of the significance of Oswald's contacts with pro-castro and anti-castro groups for the many months before the assassination those individuals directly responsible for the investigations were not fully conversant with the fluctuations in American policy toward those who opposed Castro and they lacked a working knowledge of pro-castro and anti-castro activity they did not know the full extent of US operations against Cuba including the CIA efforts to assassinate Castro the committee further found that these investigative deficiencies are probably the reason that significant leads received by intelligence agencies were not pursued senior bureau officials should have realized the FBI efforts were focused too narrowly to allow for a full investigation they should have realized the significance of Oswald's Cuban contacts could not be fully analyzed without the direct involvement of FBI personnel who had expertise in such matters yet these senior officials permitted the investigation to take this course and viewed the Warren Commission investigation in an adversarial light senior CIA officials also should have realized that their agency was not utilizing its full capability to investigate Oswald's pro-castro and anti-castro connections they should have realized that CIA operations against Cuba particularly operations involving the assassination of Castro needed to be considered in the investigation yet they directed their subordinates to conduct an investigation without telling them of these vital facts these officials whom

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these vital facts these officials whom the Warren Commission relied upon for expertise advised the Warren Commission that the CIA had no evidence of foreign conspiracy why senior officials of the FBI and the CIA permitted the investigation to go forward in light of these deficiencies and why they permitted the Warren Commission to reach its conclusion without all relevant information is still unclear certainly concerned with public reputation problem of coordination between agencies possible bureaucratic failure and embarrassment and the extreme compartment ation of knowledge of sensitive operations may have contributed to these shortcomings but the possibility exists that senior officials in both agencies made conscious decisions not to disclose potentially important information because the Select Committee to study governmental operations with respect to intelligence activities ended on May 31st 1976 a final resolution of these questions was impossible nevertheless the committee decided to make its findings public because the people have a right to know how these special agencies of the government fulfill their responsibilities the committee recommends that its successor the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence the permanent Senate committee overseeing intelligence operations continue the investigation in an attempt to resolve these questions to assist its successor this committee has forwarded all files pertaining to this investigation this phase of the committee's work will undoubtedly stir controversy few events in recent memory have so aroused the emotions of this nation and of the world as those in Dallas in November 1963 conspiracy theories and theorists abound and the public remains unsatisfied regrettably this report will not put the matter to rest even after additional investigative work no additional

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investigative work no additional evidence may come to light on the ultimate question of why President Kennedy was assassinated

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